

SUMNER TO SPEAK

LOWELL SUMNER, biologist, United States National Park Service, will present a Sierra Club educational program at 8 p. m., Tuesday, March 2, in Morrison Auditorium. Mr. Sumner will describe the little-known arctic wilderness of northeast Alaska, including the fabulous Brooks Range and the coastal plain.

Mr. Sumner has specialized in Alaskan wildlife studies and has traveled extensively in this area with his own light plane. As one of the few untouched frontiers on this continent, the region is of great value for scientific research. There is considerable interest in having it set aside as a wilderness area.

The talk, which is sponsored by the Sierra Club, is open to the public.

HONOLULU LIKES THE SHOW TOO

"SCIENCE IN ACTION" has just been named the television program with the highest educational value in a survey conducted in Honolulu. The Hawaii Education Association asked teachers and students to evaluate all shows being offered by the two local television stations. "Science In Action" was rated as an "excellent" program.

DR. KENNETH FRANKLIN TO SPEAK

SPEAKER at the Astronomy Section meeting on Wednesday, March 24, will be Dr. Kenneth Franklin of Leuschner Observatory, University of California. The program will begin at 8 p. m. in the Student Lecture Room. Leon Salanave will be in charge.

According to Salanave, astronomers have been taking increasing advantage of the fact that certain celestial bodies give out high frequency radio waves as well as (or instead of) visible light. Using "radio telescopes" to "see" such objects is a new branch of observational astronomy which has revealed a startling perspective of space, and has provided fresh data for interpreting physical conditions in the sun, stars, and galaxy.

Dr. Franklin, who is engaged in research work at Leuschner Observatory, is interested in the spectrum analysis of double stars and in the new radio astronomy. Recently he participated in a conference at the Carnegie Institution in Washington where latest developments in radio astronomy were discussed. His talk will present some of these developments, with illustrations, as well as describe the techniques of radio astronomy.

NEW MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS were elected by the Council at its meeting of February 11, 1954.

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

Mrs. Lewis H. Atkinson
Miss Jean Gertrude Brown
Mr. Ray Cavanaugh
Mr. P. J. Dahl, Jr.
Mr. Thornton Davis
Miss Charlotte H. Gough

Mr. Alexander R. Imlay

Mr. Walter L. Scheribel
Mr. Arthur H. Nelson
Miss Carol R. Petrovich
Mr. David Steinmetz
Mrs. Caroline Stuckert
Mr. Patrick D. Swope
Mr. William V. Walsh

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Harold H. Hopper

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Zoological Society of San Diego

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Anthony Fornos
Larry Preisman

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March Announcement

ACADEMY MEMBERS are invited to attend two lectures by Dr. Hermann Bondi, lecturer in astronomy at Trinity College, Cambridge University.

"WHY IS IT DARK AT NIGHT?"

"WHAT ARE THE STARS MADE OF?"

Both talks by the well-known British astrophysicist will be held in Morrison Auditorium. The first, under the sponsorship of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, will be given at 8 P. M., Tuesday, March 9; and the second, sponsored by the Academy, at 8 P. M., March 17.

Dr. Bondi is participating in the Institute of International Education's Exchange Visitors Program. He has been visiting universities and observatories throughout the country. Currently, he is giving a series of informal talks on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. Dr. Bondi, a popular lecturer and writer, is the author of *Cosmology*, published by the Cambridge Press in 1952. He is professor-elect to the Chair of Applied Mathematics at King's College, University of London, which post he will assume upon his return to England in April.

Dr. Bondi and two of his young colleagues, Fred Hoyle and R. A. Lyttleton, are much in the news these days on account of their revolutionary theories of cosmology.

The public is cordially invited.

SCIENCE FAIR NEARS

NEXT MONTH, Bay Area high school students will converge on the Academy bringing with them a grand array of science displays, exhibits, and gadgets.

The occasion will be the Bay Area Science Fair, which will run from April 23 to May 2, and is expected to attract an audience of at least ten thousand persons. Already some 450 entries are being prepared, and there is no lack of imagination. African Hall is to be equipped with a "live volcano" and a midget rocket engine. A mechanical heart, mollusk shells, growing orchids, and a model petroleum cracking plant are just a few of the things on tap.

The purpose of the fair is to stimulate students to take more active interest in the study of science and to develop inspiration for careers in science and the technical professions. Sponsors of the fair include the Academy, the San Francisco *News*, and a long list of schools and business organizations. A panel of scientists will judge the individual exhibits and make awards.

Dr. Howard M. Benninghoff, City College of San Francisco, is director of the fair.

LECTURER VISITS SACRAMENTO

THURSDAY, February 4, Leon Salanave, Planetarium lecturer, spoke in Sacramento before a regular meeting of the Sacramento Valley Astronomical Society,

in the Junior College theater. The talk was jointly sponsored by the local society and the Morrison Lecture Foundation of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. Appropriately enough, Salanave spoke on his favorite subject, "The Morrison Planetarium."

TALKING ABOUT TURTLES

FOR MONTHS we have been waiting for someone to bring up the subject of turtles so we would have an excuse to divulge an extremely curious, if not scientific, fact. Our patience was rewarded recently when Cecil Tose of the Exhibits Department and Joseph R. Slevin, curator of herpetology, decided to do an exhibit on Galapagos tortoises.

The exhibit is now on display in North American Hall, featuring the Galapagos giants and some of the lore associated with these ungainly animals.

But while we are happily on the subject of turtles—did you know there is a 17,000-pound tortoise down in the basement in the herpetological collections? As a matter of fact, Slevin thinks it might be as much as a 99,000-pound tortoise, or possibly even more. Any such figure can only be an estimate because no one counted the bills when this valuable specimen was constructed of plaster—and retired British pound notes, to hold the plaster together.

The tortoise (a sterling specimen Slevin calls it) is quite an asset scientifically speaking; it's a replica of the largest tortoise ever found living. The original came from one of the islands off the coast of Africa where giant tortoises are also found. At the time of its death it was estimated to be between 150 and 200 years old, and it weighed 560 pounds, avoirdupois that is. The replica was made from casts taken of the original shortly after its demise in England.

Tose and Slevin had planned to use the 17,000-pounder in the exhibit. However, when they attempted to move it through the basement door, it was discovered that the opening was precisely two inches too narrow. Here was a question to ponder. If the turtle once went through the door, why wouldn't it come out?

Tose holds that despite inflation and devaluation, interest has increased the principal. This seems a plausible thesis, but perhaps theorists should not ignore completely the fact that a carpenter put a new facing on the door some years ago.

BUNTON VISITS PITTSBURGH

GEORGE W. BUNTON, manager of Morrison Planetarium, returned recently from a two-day meeting attended by executives of the country's major planetariums. Host for the informal conference was Buhl Planetarium in Pittsburgh, Pa.

At discussion groups, Planetarium directors traded ideas on general planetarium management and compared notes as to programming, special effects, and promotion. All the representatives were interested in the special equipment that has been developed here at the Academy, Bunton says. Several are interested in having some equipment built for them.

An invitation was extended to the group to meet here in 1956; Morehead Planetarium, Chapel Hill, N. C., will be the host next year.

On the way home Bunton spent a day visiting Adler Planetarium in Chicago, and stayed overnight, naturally, in that city's Morrison Hotel.